



Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,
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22nd July 2022

Deputy Carol Nolan,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: carol.nolan@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Nolan,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ 37155/22

To ask the Minister for Health if his Department has conducted any assessment around the potential impact on adult and child disability respite services in counties Laois and Offaly and throughout the State following commitments by the Government to provide such services and disability specific accommodation to citizens fleeing war-torn Ukraine; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

HSE Response

In response to the war in Ukraine and dealing with ongoing and emerging issues, the HSE National Disability Operations Office will work through CHOs supporting the delivery of frontline statutory and funded disability services and Disability Umbrella Representative Bodies supporting frontline community & voluntary supports, in order to jointly manage and co-ordinate the overall response. Central to this joint effort is the need to ensure essential communication and joint working that delivers agreed measures to assist and support people arriving from the Ukraine with a disability and their families.

In this context, a National Disability Umbrella Orgs and HSE National Operations Disability Workstream Rapid Response Group (For People with Disabilities arriving to Ireland from Ukraine) has been established, to work on a consultative basis on behalf of key stakeholders in relation to people with disabilities from Ukraine arriving in Ireland. Please see Appendix 2 for list of membership of this Group.

The Disability Workstream links in with the National HSE Health and Support Needs Planning and Coordination Group and has developed a Referral Pathway for Ukrainian People with a Disability who require supports. Please see below in Appendix 1.

The HSE is endeavouring to ensure, in so far as is possible, that supports, including accommodation, for people with disabilities fleeing Ukraine is appropriate for their needs. This may include access to ground level or to lifts for wheelchair users or a quieter environment for children with autism etc.



However, it should be noted that the HSE and its funded service provider partners are operating within a buoyant and competitive housing market.

Yours sincerely

Bernard O'Regan

Bernard O'Regan
Head of Operations - Disability Services,
Community Operations



Appendix 1

Referral Pathway for Ukrainian People with a Disability

1.0 Introduction

This pathway refers to three cohorts of people with a disability arriving from Ukraine

1. Those people who are arriving in Ireland currently.
2. Those people who have arrived in Ireland since the beginning of the war and sought and are in receipt of accommodation via International Protection Accommodation Services (IPAS).
3. Those people who have arrived in Ireland since the beginning of the war and availed of private accommodation (i.e. they have not gone through IPAS for their accommodation)

2.0 Referral Pathway for Cohort 1

Over 93% (as of May 31) of people arriving from Ukraine are entering the country via Dublin Airport, Dublin Port and Rosslare Port.

1. Once disembarked from plane or ferry, the person/family is driven by bus to the Transit Centre in City West in Dublin.
2. The person/family will meet staff from the Depts. of Justice, Social Protection, Children etc. to process their documentation and apply for accommodation via IPAS (Dept of Children).
3. At the health desk (HSE) in the Transit Centre, one of the questions that the person/family will be asked is “do you have a disability?”¹
4. If the answer is “yes” the person/family will be assessed by a public health nurse or medical person/family personnel (using an assessment tool which includes specific questions regarding disabilities) on site at the Transit Centre to identify what the person/family’s health status is and if there are immediate supports required, for example – the person/family may require a wheelchair, incontinence pads, referral to the Children’s Disability Network Team for children with complex needs, etc.
5. Once this assessment is done and any immediate or urgent requirements/referrals (for example assistive technology equipment failures, escalating behaviours of concern due to trauma etc.) completed, the name and contact details of the person/family and the accommodation to which they are being sent, will be emailed to mariet.kehoe@hse.ie Marie Kehoe-O’Sullivan, the Lead for the Ukrainian Response – Disability Services (DSL).
6. The DSL will then follow up with the person/family to identify which CHO the person/family will be accommodated and then notify the Head of Disability in that CHO.
7. The Head of Disability will organise a referral to a disability team to meet the person/family and conduct a needs assessment using the National Access Policy for children’s services or the HSE Referral Form for Adult Day Services - these assessment forms have been translated into Ukrainian and Russian.
8. Following completion of these assessment, the person/family will be placed on the waiting list for the Children’s Disability Network Team, Primary Care Services or Day Service in their CHO using the usual prioritisation criteria based on the presentation complexity. If the person/family’s situation deteriorates, e.g. a child with autism becomes more distressed as a result of the trauma of fleeing the war, the child will be re-assessed using the prioritisation criteria.

¹ Research indicates that some people with a disability give a negative answer to this question. In some cases the assessor may find it appropriate to probe further enquiring, for instance, if someone has a difficulty with moving about, vision, hearing or in communicating or understanding in their own language.

3.0 Referral Pathway for Cohort 2

33,000 people (as of May 31) have arrived from the Ukraine since February. Of these 23,700 people have sought accommodation through IPAS. Some of these people have been assessed either at Dublin Airport on arrival, by InReach teams who have assessed them in their accommodation or by GPs who have either been assigned to a person/family or GPs who have conducted assessments via sessional engagements in their hotel or congregated accommodation setting. To date (June 1) a very small number of these people/families (<100) have been identified or have self-declared as having a disability. In order to communicate with and identify people/families with a disability a number of steps have been put in place.

3.1 Continued Assessments in Accommodation Centres

1. The assessments discussed above will continue over the next weeks and months.
2. Once an assessment has been completed by an InReach team or GP and a person with a disability identified, the assessor will notify the Head of Disability in the CHO where the person/family is living.
3. Steps 7-8 of the preceding pathway (for Cohort 1) will apply.

3.2 Disability specific information on HSE website for Ukrainians

There is information on the HSE page on ['Getting healthcare in Ireland'](#) for people arriving from Ukraine.

- This information includes defining what is meant by “disabilities” here in Ireland and the supports that can be provided including PHN visits, home help or provision of a Personal Assistant; services form psychology, speech & language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, paediatrics; and Day Services or Respite Services.
- We do acknowledge that there are waiting lists for these services, but the purpose of the information page is to empower people arriving from Ukraine with family members with a disability with information in order to signpost them to access these supports.
- The page also contains information and contact details for organisations that can support people and families with disabilities in their communities. All of the information on this page and the links to signpost people to supports are translated into Ukrainian and Russian.
- People can self-refer using the the National Access Policy for children’s services or the HSE Referral Form for Adult Day Services - these assessment forms have been translated into Ukrainian and Russian.
- There are also contact details for HSE disability managers on this information page, to whom the completed assessment forms would be sent.
- Once a self-referral form has been received by the appropriate disability service Step 8 of the Cohort 1 pathway will apply.

3.3 Visual Cues Posters

Posters have been developed with visual cues, translated into Ukrainian and Russian which are being displayed, with the cooperation of all of the Local Authority Community Fora in all of the accommodation centres.

- These posters ask “Do you or your child have difficulties with: walking, speaking, seeing, hearing, feeding, learning, if so please let us know and we will refer you to the HSE Disability Service.
- Each function (walking, speaking etc.) is accompanied by a picture which depicts that function.
- The link for the information page ['Getting healthcare in Ireland'](#) for people arriving from Ukraine is on the bottom of the poster.

- The name and contact details of the Head of Disability in the CHO in which that accommodation is located is also at the bottom of the poster.
- The purpose of the poster is to highlight that there are supports (both formal and informal) for people with disabilities in Ireland and giving people/families the information on how to access those supports.

4.0 Referral Pathway for Cohort 3

As stated previously, 33,000 people (as of May 31) have arrived from the Ukraine since February 2022. Of these 10,000 people have not sought accommodation through IPAS, as they availed of private accommodation. Because they did not come through the local authority but were placed directly into accommodation, they would not have come to the attention of the InReach teams or the GPs unless they were assigned a GP upon arrival when they applied for their medical card.

- The Website Information 3.2 will be the most effective way for disability services to make contact with these persons/families who may have a disability.
- The Visual Cues poster 3.3 will also be displayed in local libraries and community centres as there are weekly sessions in some counties for people who have arrived from Ukraine.

Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan, Lead for the Ukrainian Response – Disability Services
Chair of the National Disability Workstream - June 17 2022

Appendix 2

Membership of the National Disability Workstream of the HSE Ukrainian Response Planning and Coordination Group

Name	Role	Representing
Marie Kehoe-O'Sullivan (Chair)	National Disability Specialist - Quality Improvement	Disability Operations, HSE
Nicole Lam	Guidance Development and Research Lead	Disability Operations, QI Team, HSE
Dermot Ryan	nominee	National Disability Services Association (NDSA)
John Dolan Cathy McGrath	CEO	Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI)
Derval McDonagh	CEO	Inclusion Ireland
Alison Harnett Megan Leahy	CEO	Federation of Voluntary Service Providers
Anne Melly	National Disability Specialist - Adult Day Services	Disability Planning & Strategy, HSE
Edel Quinn	CHO 1	Head of Disability, HSE
Olive Hanley	CHO 9	Head of Disability, HSE
Michael Byrne	National Disability Specialist - Children's Services	Disability Operations, HSE
Mac McLachlan Mike Walsh	Clinical Lead Programme Manager	Office of the Chief Clinical Officer, HSE, National Clinical Care Programme for Disabilities
Sandra McCann	Principal Social Worker	TUSLA
Niall Keane	Community Sponsorship Lead	Irish Red Cross
Dr. Kateryna Katrusia	GP	HSE and ICGP
Grainne Begley	National Social Inclusion	HSE
Sandra Eaton	National Communication	HSE